CBSE 7201T

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**Reflection #2:** How important is the literature review (and differentiating between various types of journals) and assessing prior research, theorists, and current instructional strategies? Please post your reflection to Wikispaces before midnight Class #4 (10/2).

The literature review is an important aspect of our action research projects. The literature review offers diverse points of view on our action research topics. It also informs us, as researchers, what other people have discovered in the field. While conducting the literature review, we must be able to differentiate between various types of research.

According to Brooklyn College education librarian, Professor Matthew Harrick, peer-reviewed articles are “written by experts in the field. These types of articles contain new research that advance the field, and are of the highest quality.” Of course, we would want to include peer-reviewed articles in our literature review! In addition, a peer-reviewed article may be blind or double blind. As explained by Professor Harrick, in a blind peer-reviewed article, the reviewer “can see the author’s name, but the author can’t see the reviewer’s name.”

On the other hand, in a double-blind peer-reviewed article, both the “reviewer and the author can’t see each other’s names.” So, when putting together our literature review, we know that a double-blind peer-reviewed article is a scholarly reference we should include! Commercial and/or trade articles, such as those found in Rollingstone, or Newsweek, would not be scholarly. These types of articles are only reviewed by the editors of these publications and can be biased.

Assessing prior research, theorists, and current instructional strategies is also extremely important when preparing our own action research projects. We must assess prior research to put into perspective what has already been discovered about our topics. Prior research also supports our topics. For example, my topic asks whether technology integration hurts or helps student learning. Without prior research, what basis would I have to conduct my own research?

Theorists on our action research topics help to highlight the educational problem we are trying to fix. These theorists help us, as researchers, to develop a strong argument for use of our interventions in the educational field. In addition, current instructional strategies on our action research topics inform us how the problem we are trying to fix is being addressed today. For example, technology such as smart boards is being used in many classrooms throughout the city. The instructional strategy is to implement technology into the classroom. This gives me a starting point for my research into whether or not such technology helps or hurts student learning.

The literature review, as well as assessing prior research, theorists, and current instructional strategies, is extremely important in conducting our action research projects. These components of our action research are necessary to conduct meaningful and effective projects.

References

1. Harrick, Matthew (2012, September). Classroom lecture presented at Brooklyn College, Brooklyn, New York.